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SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: ICRC REPORT ON PRISONS

REF: STATE 147570

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (B AND D)

11. (C) Ambassador made reftel demarche to Interior Minister Baboucarr Jatta, urging the GOTG to work with the ICRC to arrange the latter's access to detainees. Ambassador noted that the ICRC had regularly visited prisoners here until 2003 and said it was imperative that they be resumed. He added that the ICRC sought such visits not to embarrass the GOTG but on purely humanitarian grounds.

12. (C) Minister Jatta took note of the demarche, but gave no substantive reaction and indicated that he was fully occupied with finalizing security arrangements for the Presidential election September 22. Ambassador reiterated the importance of this issue and stated that he would approach the Vice President on the matter.

13. (C) Ambassador has requested a meeting with the Vice President to make follow-up demarche.  
STAFFORD